

The financial aid office

While a school's financial aid office is usually assigned most of the responsibility for administering FSA programs, its role in the institution's fiscal operation is a limited one. In some cases, functions such as loan counseling might be performed by the business office instead of the aid office.

Responsibilities commonly assigned to a school's financial aid office

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| ✓ Advise and counsel students and parents about financial aid | ✓ Assist in reconciling loan records (for schools in the Direct Loan Program) |
| ✓ Provide students with consumer information, as required by federal regulations | ✓ Reconcile student financial aid data provided to the business office to ensure that all payments have been made, return of FSA funds have been accounted for, and expenditures have been reported |
| ✓ Develop written policies and procedures about the way the school administers FSA programs | ✓ Have a procedure to report any changes to ED about the school's current eligibility status (for example, change in ownership, address, name, officials, third-party servicers, and so on) |
| ✓ Determine students' eligibility for financial aid | ✓ Perform (limited) fiscal operations, such as: |
| ✓ Make financial aid awards to students | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • authorizing payment of FSA funds to student accounts or to students directly • authorizing return of Title IV funds to program accounts and post-withdrawal disbursements to students • notifying a student who owes an overpayment as a result of the student's withdrawal from the school in order for ED or the school to recover the overpayment • notifying ED of the overpayment • coordinating submission of the Fiscal Operations Report and Application to Participate (FISAP) |
| ✓ Adhere to the principle of separation of functions (no single office or individual may authorize payments and disburse FSA funds to students) | |
| ✓ In administering financial aid programs, coordinate financial aid activities with those of other school offices | |
| ✓ Interact with various outside groups, agencies, associations, and individuals about issues concerning the school's administration of financial aid programs | |
| ✓ Monitor students' satisfactory academic progress (SAP) | |
| ✓ Maintain school records and student records that document the administration of the financial aid office and provide data for reports | |
| ✓ Keep current on changes in laws and regulations to ensure that the school remains in compliance | |
| ✓ Assist in reporting program expenditures | ✓ Provide entrance and exit counseling to borrowers of FFEL Program loans and Direct Loan Program loans as part of the award and delivery process ¹ |
| ✓ Manage and report on activities that involve financial aid funds | |
| ✓ Calculate the return of Title IV funds and, if it applies, authorize post-withdrawal disbursements to students | ✓ Provide entrance and exit counseling to borrowers of Federal Perkins Loans as part of the award and delivery process ² |

1,2 At some schools, the business office performs this function